

Community Preservation Act Committee (CPAC)
Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, February 10th, 2015

The meeting was called to order at 7:12 pm by Mary Streeter, Chair, in the Town Room at Town Hall.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Marilyn Blaustein, Paris Boice, Ellen Kosmer, Jim Oldham, Mary Streeter

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:

Jim Brissette, Peter Jessop, Laura Lovett

STAFF IN ATTENDANCE:

Sonia Aldrich, Linda Chalfant, Nathaniel Malloy, David Ziomek

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:

(From Sign In Sheet)

Name	Proposal
Isabel Murphy	Hall property
Isabella Halsted	Hall property
Patricia Ramsey	Hall property
Jonathan Kane	Amherst Baseball, Inc.
Angela Mills	Amherst Baseball, Inc. (LSSE Committee)
E.J. Mills	Amherst Baseball Inc. (Amherst College Football Coach)
George Forman	Hall property
Marrion Hoffman Forman	Hall property
Rod Greene	Hall property
Phyllis Ladd	Hall property
Susan Riter	Hall property
Sarah Matthews	Hall property

Agenda items to be discussed:

Recreation Proposal Presentations:

- 7:05 - Amherst Baseball Fields at Mill River - Budington
- 7:25 - North Amherst Recreation Field - Chalfant, Ziomek

Historic Preservation Proposal Presentation:

- 7:45 - Sweetser Park Fountain – Malloy, Ziomek

Open Space Proposal Presentations:

- 8:05 - Open Space Due Diligence Funds - Ziomek
- 8:10 - Conservation of Hall Property off Old Farm Road - Ziomek, et al.
- 8:30 - APR of Hoerle Property on South East Street – Ziomek

Preliminary Funding Proposals

- 8:40 - Preliminary Funding Proposals – Ziomek
- Administrative Funding
- Review & discuss proposals
- Review financial Information
- Request updates from past recipients of CPA funds
- Approve any minutes
- Topics the Chair did not reasonably anticipate 48 hours before the meeting

Discussion:

Mary Streeter - There will be a public hearing on February 24th at 7pm in the Town Room at Town Hall to hear public comment. The committee will allow some time tonight to hear comments from the public, but we encourage the audience to attend the public hearing as well to voice their support and concerns.

The order of presentations:

7:05 Amherst Baseball Fields at Mill River - Budington
 7:25 North Amherst Recreation Field - Chalfant, LSSE
 7:45 Sweetser Park Fountain - Malloy
 8:05 Open Space Due Diligence Funds - Ziomek
 8:10 Conservation of Hall Property off Old Farm Road - Ziomek, et al.
 8:30 APR of Hoerle Property on South East Street - Ziomek
 8:40 Preliminary Funding Proposals - Ziomek

Amherst Baseball Fields at Mill River Nate Buddington, Amherst Baseball, Inc.

Powerpoint presentation- Will be available on the Town of Amherst website

Mr. Buddington presented information on the history of recreational baseball in Amherst. One issue they think we may have is that they have not found any matching funds. They have done a lot of fundraising in the past, and made significant investments, both in terms of money and volunteer labor, to the Town of Amherst playing fields. Mr. Buddington presented the issues with their equipment and fields, which included safety concerns and difficulty with coaching and playing. The improvements include engineered soils, batting cages, dugouts, water, electricity, and fence protectors. Maintenance will be overseen by Amherst Baseball, Inc. and will be completed as soon as funds are available.

Questions from the Committee members:

Q: How many kids play/benefit?

A: About 170 kids from 5/6 year olds to 17/18 year olds. In addition, fields are also open to the public any time they are not in use by the town

Q: What other funds do you have available?

A: Amherst Baseball Inc. is starting another fundraising campaign this year and they expect to have a couple thousand dollars to spend towards maintenance, etc.

Q: What are your priorities?/If you don't receive all the funds from CPA, then what will you complete?

A:

1. soils
2. dugout
3. batting cages

LSSE Chair Angela Mills spoke- LSSE commission approved this proposal. They gave it two thumbs up.

North Amherst Recreation Field

Linda Chalfant, LSSE Director and Dave Ziomek, Assistant Town Manager

The north Amherst recreation field is in need of safety measures, and the town has not used this field because of the lack of parking and safety issues. This is a small field, which will probably be used for smaller kids, but only if the proposed safety measures are installed. The proposal includes a TRG (trap rock gravel) informal parking area, safety fence and a moveable backstop.

Questions from the Committee members:

Q: Is there going to be another crosswalk?

A: No

Q: Do any trees have to be removed?

A: No

Q: Are there any wetlands/Do you need permitting through the conservation commission?

A: No

Q: Are there issues with accessing from the current crosswalk?

A: No, you will be able to access the field from the current crosswalk.

Q: Are there issues with current users/cricket players? Is it a UMass club?

A: The town will have to have a discussion with UMass and informal groups using the field.

Q: What other groups are using this field?

A: Unsure

Q: How is field access allocated? The last time Amherst spent significant money on fields certain groups were excluded. For example, the exclusion of girls soccer from certain fields that the town invested money in. How are you making sure that the groups we rely on to partner with the town are making access equitable?

A: Town will look into how to make access equitable.

Q: Will you be providing an itemized list of estimates for work?

A: Yes, they will get that to the CPAC before the public hearing. Estimates for work based on other Town of Amherst projects completed in 2014

Q: Have you looked at alternatives for parking, such as using and retrofitting the lot at the Amherst Family Center.

A: Retrofitting the Family Center lot is cost prohibitive at this time. Any lot that is built needs to be ADA accessible.

Q: What is the condition of the turf?

A: With regularly scheduled maintenance the turf will be in excellent shape.

LSSE- Unanimous support. Liked that it was adjacent to mill river and walkable for many communities.

Sweetser Park Fountain- Enos Cook Fountain

Nathaniel Malloy, Associate Planner and Historical Commission Staff liaison

The fountain needs to be studied to determine what shape the fountain is in and what needs to be done to preserve it. The Historical Commission would like to save as much of the marble as possible. There will need to be a field study of the marble.

Questions from the Committee members:

Q: Are they going to look at the hydraulics?

A: No, they completed work on the plumbing in the 1990's

Q: The work done in the 1990s was done on the plumbing, was there deconstruction of the fountain?

A: Yes they disassembled some of the fountain.

Some temporary fixes have been done- joints between the marble pieces have been rejoined temporarily with caulking/epoxy

Q: Are more funds needed?

A: Yes, likely more funds will be required for the cost of winter shelter (about \$5,000) and for the cost of fixing plumbing.

Q: The Rotary Club fundraiser of selling bricks...could that happen again?

A: Yes, either CPA funds or a fundraising campaign, like the one led by the Rotary Club in the past, would have to happen to complete repairs.

Conservation of Hall Property off Old Farm Road

Dave Ziomek, Assistant Town Manager

This is one of the highest priorities for the Conservation Commission.

This includes land next to Gull pond and land next to Owens pond at the Wentworth Farm conservation area. Hall has been in talks with the town for about 5 years to purchase this property. Wentworth Farm is one of the most popular conservation areas in town currently. The town has already received a grant from the state that totals \$235,000. The town is looking for the remainder of the funding from CPAC as well as from the neighbors, who have started a fundraising campaign. The property is adjacent to Wentworth Farm, adjacent to low and moderate income areas, within walking distance to East Amherst village center, includes water resources, includes NHESP priority and estimated habitat for rare species and has the potential for some land to be included in agricultural licensing program.

Dave answered questions from CPAC's list of questions about the project generated at the previous CPAC meeting.

- The Kestrel Trust will hold the conservation restriction.
- passive recreation is included, but this is a conservation proposal
- farmers cannot sell produce on site that was purchased with state funds
- budget is locked in and he doesn't think there will be any changes to budget

Paris Boice- Conservation Commission was in favor and voted unanimously to support this project because of its ecological value and its alignment with open space and recreation plan goals.

Further questions from the Committee members:

Q: What was the original intent for the property?

A: Proposed subdivision that was never built on the lot next to Owens pond.

Q: Can anything be done about the build up of algae in gull pond?

A: Yes, need to have discussions with Conservation Commission. A proposal of this sort was brought to the Conservation Commission recently but it included only chemical (herbicidal) means of control and the commission was not in favor of the proposal for this reason. They would most likely consider a proposal which included mechanical means of control.

Q: Are there issues with Gull pond and leachate from the old landfill?

A: DPW has monitoring wells surrounding the area. There hasn't been an issue.

Neighbor comments:

- wildlife and wetlands in the parcel behind Gull pond.
- wonderful spot, there is a lot of neighbor support and the neighbors formed Friends of Gull Pond in 1993.
- people enjoy fishing in the pond, otters and osprey have been seen as well as other wildlife.
- highly accessible to all people, very flat and wide trail.

Dave stated that the town needs the funding from CPA this round to receive the funding

from the state.

APR of Hoerle Property on South East Street

Dave Ziomek, Assistant Town Manager

APR, Agricultural Preservation Restriction, proposal for 66 acres. This project is a high priority for the town and for the Conservation Commission, who voted unanimously in favor of the project. Mr. Hoerle, the property owner, is still in negotiations with the state about APR value, so the project may not necessarily be ready this round. There are plans for a sustainable, organic, biodynamic farm on the property. The property includes core habitat and critical habitat adjacent to the Hop Brook, which is rich with important mussel and fish species. The maps attached to the proposal show the ecological importance of this property. The town can't say with certainty that the deal will go through, or if the final ask from the CPAC will be \$50,000.

Questions from the Committee members:

Q: Is there a chance that the deal won't go through?

A: Yes, there is always a chance that the deal can fall through if there is not an agreement on the value of the APR.

Mary Streeter- We should think about wording the article in such a way on the warrant so that we can keep it on the warrant in case the deal goes through.

We need to consider if there will be another round of funding in the fall, for this proposal and potentially for other proposals.

Open Space Due Diligence Funds

Dave Ziomek, Assistant Town Manager

The current balance is \$13,500, there are further commitments for about \$9,000 of that money. Without this money the town's ability to purchase, scope out new projects, etc. is limited. The ask is based on previous yearly spending. The money has been spent on appraisals, surveys, wetlands delineations, and so forth. We always look for ways to match funding, and the APR program does their own appraisals.

Preliminary Funding Proposals

Dave Ziomek, Assistant Town Manager

Waiting an entire year for another round of funding is difficult. The town and town staff have been thinking about the following projects and would like to bring something forward potentially during the next round of funding, for the North Common and the modernization of Groff Park.

There was a letter from Elisabeth Hamin about Puffer's Pond 2020 recommendations. The Committee discussed the degradation of Puffers Pond and looking ahead we would like to see a proposal for work at Puffers Pond. The town is planning a community conversation about Puffers Pond to refocus on this issue this spring. Dave reminded the Committee that we can't actually use CPA funds on many Puffers Pond projects because of the current allowable uses of CPA funds.

Sonia Aldrich- Updated and explained the CPAC FY2016 Recommendations to Town Meeting worksheet draft and will send a draft to the committee in Excel.

Motion: Paris Boice moved to accept meeting minutes from December 16th, 2014
Ellen Kosmer seconded.

Voted: 5-0-3

Most voting for the CPA proposals will happen at the March 3rd, 2014 meeting.

Motion: Paris Boice made a motion to adjourn at 9:16pm and Marilyn Blaustein seconded.

Voted: 5-0-3

Future Meetings:

March 3rd, 2015

March 31st, 2015

Meeting Handouts:

- Draft meeting Minutes for Tuesday, December 16th, 2014
- Memo from the Amherst Human Rights Commission in support of the A.M.E. Zion Church
- Withdrawal letter from the Jewish Community of Amherst
- Proposal for Professional Condition Assessment Services- Enos Cook Memorial Fountain in Sweetser Park
- Letters to Community Preservation Act Committee in Support of Proposal to purchase Hall Property off Old Farm Road
- North Amherst Field/Hall Property/Hoerle Property Picture Handouts
- Itemized list of work with cost estimates and examples of improvements for Amherst Baseball, Inc. proposal
- CPAC FY2016 Recommendations to Town Meeting worksheet draft

Respectfully submitted by Paris Boice on 2/24/2015

Approved March 3, 2015